Getting ready for the Next Big Thing:

5 KEY QUESTIONS for managing your changing IT environment.

The future of IT management is now. Answer these five questions to assess your readiness to manage the ongoing explosion of apps, data, and platforms.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

## INTRODUCTION:

3  Transforming IT (again)
4  Hybrid cloud is the next big thing
5  Significant IT management challenges are here

## 5 KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT HYBRID CLOUD

7  Are you ready for the next big thing?
9  Are you able to manage and recover any platform, any cloud and any workload?
11 Do you have insight into unseen issues and can you fix them fast?
13 Are you managing your management tools or driving innovation for your business?
15 Are you as secure and protected as you can be?
17 Conclusion: Finding your way to yes
TRANSFORMING IT (AGAIN)

Not so long ago, virtualization transformed information technology (IT), delivering groundbreaking benefits like vastly improved utilization of hardware, faster provisioning and de-provisioning of servers, increased flexibility, and additional options for uptime (to name a few).

Today, another transformation is taking place that’s just as pivotal. This time hybrid cloud is starring as the next big thing, and for good reason. With the help of hybrid cloud, IT pros can now deploy applications with much greater flexibility, taking advantage of many cloud benefits. They also can provide developers with self-service, tenant-based experiences for rapidly building apps in a consistent environment across development, test, and production. As these examples (and many recent buzzy tech blog posts) show, the list of hybrid cloud benefits is long.
WHILE THE BENEFITS OF HYBRID CLOUD ARE INTRIGUING, THEY ALSO CREATE NEW IT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

DATA IS EVERYWHERE. Getting visibility into your data has gone from a routine, everyday task to a key business challenge. In a traditional environment, there are only so many places where your data can be stored, and you know them like the back of your hand. With hybrid cloud, the game changes to include lots of new places where your data can be stored, and if you aren’t careful, these can become “hiding places” outside of your four walls and beyond your perceptibility.

THE NUMBER OF MODERN APPLICATIONS BEING BUILT IS EXPLODING, CREATING MANAGEMENT HEADACHES FOR THOSE WHO DON’T HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS TO MANAGE THEM. It wasn’t long ago that when something broke, you could take a hands-on approach to fixing it by looking through dozens — sometimes hundreds — of logs from your on-premises datacenter. Not anymore. With the explosion of applications and data, you would have to look through hundreds of thousands — if not millions — of logs spread across multiple environments. Solving problems manually is now virtually impossible, yet your existing management tools likely don’t offer a better alternative.

DEVELOPERS ARE REACHING FOR ANY PLATFORM, AND ANY TOOL, THAT WILL HELP THEM DELIVER AT A FAST AND FURIOUS PACE. While the best new tools and platforms help developer teams deliver quickly, they also need to be managed by IT, which requires you to learn, manage, and maintain new tools of your own.
ATTEMPTED SOLUTIONS: IT HEROICS

IN THE FACE OF THESE NEW CHALLENGES, IT PROS ARE DOING WHAT THEY ALWAYS DO — WHATEVER IT TAKES
to keep IT running smoothly and able to serve the needs of the business. Unfortunately, that likely means you are putting needs such as driving innovation on hold, and spending more and more time learning and adding one-off management tools to keep things running. The need for such heroics is pretty common considering platform evolutions are changing the game far more quickly than management tools can keep up.

While your ability to juggle all of these one-off management system requests is impressive to say the least, it can only work for so long. The good news is a new wave of management tools is available. Choosing the right tools today will help you consolidate existing tools while also gaining crucial visibility across your environments, workloads and platforms. And maybe best of all, there doesn’t have to be a steep learning curve like there is with one-off point solutions.

No matter where you are in this ongoing transformation to a hybrid cloud world, you can be sure to make it successful by answering the following five questions with confidence.
5 KEY HYBRID CLOUD QUESTIONS

- Are you ready for the next big thing?
- Are you able to manage and recover any platform, any cloud and any workload?
- Do you have insight into unseen issues and can you fix them fast?
- Are you managing your management tools or driving innovation for your business?
- Are you as secure and protected as you can be?
NO SURPRISE HERE: THE NEXT BIG THING IS THE HYBRID CLOUD. The real question is what tools do IT pros need to both manage and get ahead of the transformation that the hybrid cloud is bringing?

As developers continue to do what developers do (build apps as quickly as they can on any platform or technology that can increase their productivity), you need tools to bring those applications into your managed and protected environment.
As we look to a future where micro-services, containers, applications and data span on-premises and cloud, and loosely coupled applications become the norm, imagine management solutions visually mapping all of these wide-ranging dependencies across all of their possible environments. Keeping up in this world will require a modern management solution that is flexible, always up-to-date, leaves little management footprint, and is easy to learn. Importantly, it must help you spot what’s new (and bring it to you automatically) so you can stay ahead. And while future proofing your management environment, it should also cater to your traditional infrastructure needs.

To get to that future as quickly as you can, you need management-as-a-service tools that can help you manage any platform, any workload, anywhere. With this in mind, modern management systems are working to make sure you’re always tapped into what’s next.
As they strive to deliver new applications faster, developers are stretching it across many new experiences — public clouds, micro-services and containers among them. As you are well aware, this means the days where IT shops manage one environment and one platform are gone. You also know that the tools to manage revolutionary transformations like this naturally tend to lag, leaving you to hold everything together while everything changes.

Question 2: Are you able to manage and recover any platform, any cloud and any workload?
No matter how intrepidly you work, chances are your outdated tools make it impossible to keep up. Can they give you visibility into the health, performance and well-being of your virtual machines no matter where they are? Do they let you automate tasks across clouds, or across Windows and Linux? Can you recover from data corruption or a datacenter disaster with the click of a button? Not so much.

There are new built-from-the-ground-up management tools that can help you tackle these hybrid cloud-created challenges. Thankfully, they aren’t meant to replace the tools that you use to manage your on-premises environment. Instead, these new tools are designed to support you while you chase after developers as they build anything they can think of in the cloud while also allowing you to continue using your favorite tools to keep your on-premises workloads running as smoothly as always.
QUESTION 3:
DO YOU HAVE INSIGHT INTO UNSEEN ISSUES AND CAN YOU FIX THEM FAST?

OVER THE YEARS, YOUR ENVIRONMENTS HAVE BECOME MORE COMPLEX, FORCING YOU TO MANAGE YOUR TICKETS MORE REACTIVELY THAN YOU MIGHT LIKE. Complexity has also made it difficult to stay on top of the latest updates and upgrades your systems need.

Still, new tools and technologies are enabling IT pros like you to do more proactive monitoring and analysis. For example, modern solutions can help you anticipate when problems will occur so that you can be proactive in preventing them from happening altogether. In addition, you can quickly identify which of the dozens to hundreds of alerts you get every day represent real trouble that you need to address (and which you can safely ignore).
The challenge today and for the future is how — in a simple way — to collate all this important information from your servers, workloads and applications. Collection is only part of the story — you also have to answer how you will store it, analyze it, build bridges between it and the rest of your systems, and, most important, make it easy to consume.

The answer is to adopt a modern management system, that can help you proactively identify and troubleshoot issues with powerful search capabilities, simple and intuitive dashboards, and out-of-the-box solutions. Through this new breed of tools — which can be seamlessly integrated into a number of different management environments — you can predict problems and, by tapping your management environment’s vast operational intelligence knowledgebase, quickly fix them.
As your developers go farther and farther afield in the race to build the most lucrative apps, pressure is mounting on you and your fellow IT pros to stay ahead of this explosion. As new technology and platforms are added on almost a daily basis, you get stuck wrangling all of these new workloads with an increasingly fragmented and unconnected set of management tools.

While you and your colleagues are going to great lengths to support this proliferation of one-off management requests as they pop up, you can only scale so much. Rather than burn all of your time wading through this palooza of unconnected tools (which is expensive for your company and painful for you), your time would be much better spent working on your company’s core management needs.
There is no doubt that the transition to the hybrid cloud has created a crush of new challenges for IT shops, but there is also a vibrant set of new tools that can help you get ahead in this next-gen world. You can use hybrid cloud solutions to build on your existing management investments while also seamlessly providing tools that enable you to deliver management capabilities as a service. That includes reducing the need to set up and maintain complex management systems yourself.

As you think about the future, consider consolidating your management solutions while complementing the ones you keep with those built in the cloud, for the cloud. Extend your existing Windows Server (or similar) infrastructure footprint into a SaaS-based management solution, and avoid adding additional management infrastructure while sustaining and growing your IT management portfolio.
QUESTION 5:
ARE YOU AS SECURE AND PROTECTED AS YOU CAN BE?

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF BUSINESSES IN THIS WORLD: THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN HACKED, AND THOSE THAT WILL BE, according to Robert Mueller, former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. (It typically takes six months to a year for a business to realize it has been hit.)

Recognizing threats quickly always has been a challenge, but now the situation is much worse because you don’t know where attacks will come from — a hacker, rogue employee, unpatched server, malware, or from an entirely new, unexpected source. On top of that, now that you have a presence in many more environments (think about the apps that you now have scattered across your on-premises databases and your private and public clouds) you have much more surface area that could be attacked. When attacks happen, service can be interrupted, impacting revenue flow and possibly compromising customer data collected by your apps (potentially violating privacy regulations).

So how should you address this?
Say something has gone wrong — a hacker has found a way into your company’s database and may have stolen private information, like credit card and social security numbers. Modern management solutions will let you know about the threat quickly, and escalate its importance so you know it’s a big deal.

These modern management systems tackle challenges like this with out-of-the-box solutions that help you spot and respond to attacks no matter the technology or platform. These tools also help protect your apps against attacks and malware, and they standardize the way you get updates. Taking this one step further, they automatically notify you when updates or patches are needed across all of your apps, datacenters and platforms, whether cloud-based or on-premises. And soon, when cloud-based patching is available, you will be able to monitor which servers have the latest updates, allowing you to detect breaches and threats with system-wide malware assessments.
CONCLUSION:
FINDING YOUR WAY TO YES

There’s no question that today’s rapid transformation to hybrid IT has put immense pressure on IT pros and the management tools they use.

**To successfully transition into this new hybrid cloud world, you need to be able to confidently answer “yes” to these five questions.** Microsoft has been your trusted partner as your IT has evolved through physical, virtual, and private cloud transformations. With the next big thing, we are ready with new management tools to help you tackle the opportunity head on. Find out about the latest innovations which will enable you to manage and protect your IT investments with a cost-effective hybrid cloud IT management solution. Gain the ability to collect, correlate, and act on data, protect your servers from downtime, and identify, assess and mitigate security risks, all while simplifying your management infrastructure.

To talk to an IT expert and learn more about the Microsoft solution that can help you manage your changing IT environment, click **HERE**. Be ready for what’s next, and be in control of your hybrid IT management.